chairman of International AIDS task force, India is on the brink of an AIDS catastrophe;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) what steps are proposed by Government to meet this threat and control the epidemic?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D. K. THARA DEVI): (a) to (c) A. U. S. Congressman who visited India in April, 1991 has estimated that one million persons may be infected. He has based his estimation on the prevalence of infection among prostitutes and spread of infection to their clients in Bombay. Also reckoning the spread of HIV infection through contaminated blood and through sharing of needles by intravenous drug users, the Congressman has estimated that one million may be infected.

Government of India with the help of WHO assistance has formulated an action plan for undertaking prevention and control measures in the most affected states, viz: Maharashtra Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Delhi and Manipur. The control measures relate to:—

— Information, education and communication.

— Sexually Transmitted diseases.

— Blood Safety.

— Clinical Management.

— Programme Management.

The World Health Organisation has agreed to provide assistance for financing the Action Plans in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Manipur and Union Territory of Delhi. The amounts earmarked for each State are as under:—

	State	Amount US$ (in lakhs)
1.	Maharashtra . .	4·45
2.	Manipur . . .	0·63
3.	Tamil Nadu . .	2·87
4.	West Bengal . .	3·67
5.	Delhi . . .	1·42

Number of special courts constituted in the country

205. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the States and Union Territories in which special courts have been constituted so far to deal with the cases regarding violation of the provisions of the Water and Air Acts;

(b) the number of cases which are pending in these special courts at present; and

(c) whether Government propose to monitor the progress of establishment of such special courts in different States and Union Territories and if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) (SHRI KAMAL NATH) (a) Special Courts have been set up in the States of Bihar, Orissa & Uttar Pradesh and the Union Territory of Delhi to deal with cases relating to violation of the provisions of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.

(b) The number of cases pending in the Special Courts are: Bihar—185; Orissa—52; Uttar Pradesh—102; Union Territory of Delhi—29.

(c) The Government is already monitoring the progress of establishment of Special Courts in Different States.

Medical bills received by State Bank of Indore from Staff Members of Janak Puri Branch

206. SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of medical bills that have been received by the Regional Office, New Delhi/Zonal Office, Bhopal of the State Bank of Indore from the Staff Members of Janak Puri Branch, New Delhi, under hospitalisation scheme during March, 1991 to April 1991;

(b) if so, what are the details of medical bills including names of employees;

(c) what is the number of medical bills sanctioned so far, the number of bills pending and the bills which have been misplaced; and

(d) the number of letters received from the employees by the Regional Manager-5, till date and what action have been taken by the bank?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) to (c) State Bank of Indore has reported that it received only one medical bill from Shri C. L. Verma, Head Clerk, Janak Puri branch, New Delhi in connection with his son's sickness. An amount of Rs. 681.80 has since been paid to him. The bank has further reported that no other bill is pending or misplaced.

(d) The bank has reported that only one letter on the subject was received from Shri C. L. Verma on June 8, 1991 and the (amount) bill was sanctioned on 2.7.1991.

Exaggerated claims by banks regarding loan waiver scheme

207. DR. BAPU KALDATE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a sample survey conduced by the Reserve Bank of India of certain branches of the nationalised Banks in the country has revealed exaggerated claims regarding loan waiver scheme;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what steps have been taken or are proposed to be taken by Government with regard to the inflated claims of the banks concerned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Wholesale price index

208. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the latest official wholesale price index (base: 1981-82-100);

(b) what is the rate of inflation at present; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to bring down the wholesale price index/rate of inflation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR): (a) The latest official Wholesale Price Index (Base: 1981-82—100) is 196.4 for June 29, 1991.

(b) The annual rate of inflation in terms of Wholesale Price Index on a point to points was 10.2 per cent on 29th June, 1991.

(c) The steps being taken by the Government to bring down the Wholesale Price Index/rate of inflation include strict fiscal discipline, check on expansion of money supply, more effective management of supply and demand of essential/sensitive commodities, streamlining of the Public Distribution System and strict action against hoarders and profiteers.